



TENNESSEE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
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September 22, 2006
Board of Commissioner's
Meeting Minutes

Commissioner's Present:

Commissioner Davis
Commissioner Hakeem
Commissioner Jones (via Phone)
Commissioner Pierce
Commissioner Pride
Commissioner Rogers
Commissioner Starling
Commissioner Walker
Chairman Wiggins

Commissioner's Absent:

Commissioner Horne
Commissioner Kyles
Commissioner Smith
Commissioner Garrett

Staff Present:

Amber D. Gooding, Executive Director
Antonio Adams, Deputy Director
Robert Bright, Housing Director
Shay Rose, General Counsel
Lisa Lancaster, Executive Director's Assistant

Guests:

Roy Rogers

Call to Order & Invocation

Chairman Wiggins called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Roll call was taken. Commissioner Davis offered the invocation.

Minutes & Roll Call

The minutes of the September 22, 2006 board meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Hakeem made a motion to accept the minutes. Commissioner Pride seconded the motion.

Announcements

Amber Gooding, Executive Director, informed the Board that Idris Keith would be joining the staff on October 1st and would be replacing Mr. Antonio Adams as Deputy Director upon his departure. Mr. Keith comes from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development where he was a hearing officer. He has a law degree and will sit for the bar in February of 2007.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director, Amber Gooding reported that the Financial Audit is now complete. It was noted that a draft document has not been received on the Performance audit of the Financial Audit but she is hopeful that both documents would be available for the November Board meeting.

It was announced that General Counsel, Shalini Rose, was working on Agency Rule changes and would meet with the Law & Legislation committee before the next Board meeting to review a draft of the proposed changes with board approval and submission to the General Assembly hopefully by the January 2007 Board Meeting.

Executive Director Gooding reminded the Commission that the Communications Officer position vacated by Cynthia Howard has not been filled as agency needs are being assessed and that approval of the additional full-time staff position requested has not been received.

THRC staff members Frank Guzman, Special Projects Officer and Shay Rose, General Counsel, are continuing to work with the Clarksville and Springfield communities and Department Of Justice to address discrimination issues.

Executive Director Gooding noted that beginning with the November Board Meeting THRC staff would begin an educational component on the Board Agenda.

Commissioner Pierce made a motion to accept the Executive Director's report. Commissioner Starling seconded the motion.

Budget & Audit Committee Report

Chairman of the Budget & Audit committee, Commissioner Hakeem reported that the committee reviewed with Executive Director Gooding, the end of the year budget figures. Items of special interest were that the agency has requested a Spending Authority increase for the upcoming fiscal year and a full time legal assistant position for the Intake unit.

Commissioner Pride made a motion to accept the report. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

Employment Case Report

Deputy Director, Antonio Adams, thanked the Commission and the THRC staff giving him the opportunity to serve the department as Deputy Director for the last 2 years. He then updated the board on the most recent employment numbers. A total of 137 employment cases have been closed since the last board meeting in September 2006. Deputy Adams noted that there are still problems with the new IMS system and that EEOC is hopeful that the system will be fully operational very soon..

Commissioner Starling made a motion to accept the employment case report. Commissioner Hakeem seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed.

Housing Case Report

Housing Director, Robert Bright, reported that 33 housing cases have been closed since the September 2006 board meeting. Currently there are 34 cases in inventory and the number one bases for cases filed is still race, although cases filed on National origin are on the increase.

Chairman Wiggins appointed Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Rogers & Commissioner Garrett as the Nominating committee noting that they would receive notification of the Nominating committee meeting by email and charged the committee with nominating a slate of officers for 2007 and make a recommendation to the Board at the November Annual meeting. He then turned the meeting over to Commissioner Pierce as he departed the meeting.

Commissioner Rogers made a motion to accept the housing case report. Commissioner Walker seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed.

Legal Report

Shalini Rose, General Counsel, updated the Board on 20 employment and housing cause cases. Settlement, docketing for hearing, training, and conciliation, among other possible solutions were discussed.

Commissioner Pierce shared fliers with the board for two upcoming women's conferences. Executive Director Gooding reminded the board that the Annual Meeting would take place in November and that the January board meeting would be conducted via teleconference.

With no further business to address, Commissioner Starling made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.